

§ 97-61.5. Hearing after first examination and report; removal of employee from hazardous occupation; compensation upon removal from hazardous occupation.

(a) After the employer and employee have received notice of the first committee report, the Industrial Commission, unless it has already approved an agreement between the employer and employee, shall set the matter for hearing at a time and place to be decided by it, to hear any controverted questions, determine if and to whom liability attaches, and where appropriate, file a written opinion with its findings of fact and conclusions of law and cause its award to be issued thereon, all of which shall be subject to modification as provided in G.S. 97-61.6.

(b) If the Industrial Commission finds at the first hearing that the employee has either asbestosis or silicosis or if the parties enter into an agreement to the effect that the employee has silicosis or asbestosis, it shall by order remove the employee from any occupation which exposes him to the hazards of asbestosis or silicosis, and if the employee thereafter engages in any occupation which exposes him to the hazards of asbestosis or silicosis without having obtained the written approval of the Industrial Commission as provided in G.S. 97-61.7, neither he, his dependents, personal representative nor any other person shall be entitled to any compensation for disablement or death resulting from asbestosis or silicosis; provided, that if the employee is removed from the industry the employer shall pay or cause to be paid as in this subsection provided to the employee affected by such asbestosis or silicosis a weekly compensation equal to sixty-six and two-thirds percent ($66\frac{2}{3}\%$) of his average weekly wages before removal from the industry, but not more than the amount established annually to be effective October 1 as provided in G.S. 97-29 or less than thirty dollars (\$30.00) a week, which compensation shall continue for a period of 104 weeks. Payments made under this subsection shall be credited on the amounts payable under any final award in the cause entered under G.S. 97-61.6. (1935, c. 123; 1945, c. 762; 1955, c. 525, s. 2; c. 1354; 1957, c. 1217; c. 1396, s. 8; 1963, c. 604, s. 6; 1967, c. 84, s. 7; 1969, c. 143, s. 6; 1971, c. 281, s. 5; 1973, c. 515, s. 6; c. 759, s. 5; 1981, c. 276, s. 1; c. 378, s. 1.)